

I am writing to you today as Breanne Riley, a dedicated Hearing Specialist at London Disability, where I have proudly served for the past 5 1/2 years. In my role, I am entrusted with the crucial responsibility of assisting clients grappling with severe medical disabilities that render them unable to work. It is an honor to share my testimony in support of the current bill, as I firmly believe in its significance for individuals seeking disability claims.

One of the core aspects of our advocacy involves navigating the intricate process of obtaining medical records on behalf of our clients. These records play a pivotal role in substantiating our clients' claims for Social Security benefits. However, a recurring challenge we face is the financial burden associated with procuring these essential medical documents.

As advocates for our clients, we willingly bear the upfront costs of obtaining medical records. Regrettably, once a client's case concludes, they often find themselves unable to reimburse us due to the pressing nature of past-due bills that take precedence in their day-to-day lives. This poses a significant dilemma for both our clients and our organization.

The bill currently under consideration addresses this critical issue by proposing that the cost for medical records, when requested for disability claims, should be waived. I wholeheartedly endorse this proposal, as it aligns with our commitment to ensuring the welfare of our clients. By removing the financial barrier associated with obtaining medical records, we can streamline the claims process and empower our clients to access the benefits they rightfully deserve.

In my tenure at London Disability, I have encountered numerous cases that have been needlessly prolonged due to exorbitant invoices received from doctors' offices, medical entities, or third-party entities involved in the retrieval of medical records. The passage of this bill would not only alleviate the financial strain on our clients but also expedite the resolution of disability claims, contributing to a more efficient and just system.

I urge you, esteemed members of the committee, to support and pass this bill. Doing so would not only relieve the financial burden on individuals with severe medical disabilities but also uphold the principles of fairness and accessibility within the disability claims process.